

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that the first two C-17s will arrive at Stewart Air National Guard Base in July 2011, a move that Hinchey had long fought for to strengthen the base and the region's economy. Delivery of the first two C-17s in the eight aircraft fleet planned for Stewart will allow the 105th Airlift Wing to commence maintenance training. A third plane will arrive by the end of September 2011 to allow for aircrew training. The remaining aircraft will be in place by the end of Fiscal Year 2012, enabling the unit to reach a planned initial Operational Capability by December of 2013.

"The first C-17s will arrive at Stewart in July, all eight will be in place by the end of next year and the unit will be fully up and running by the end of the following year," said Hinchey. "I've been working to secure this C-17 mission for years because it will improve the safety of our troops as they are transported abroad and ensure the continued strategic importance of Stewart, helping to secure jobs and economic growth in the Hudson Valley. This is great news for the region, Stewart and the 105th Airlift Wing."

The C-17 mission will boost the 105th Airlift Wing's ability to provide trans-Atlantic flights to service members abroad, ensuring the base's continued strategic importance. Stewart is one of the Lower Hudson Valley's largest employers, generating over \$200 million in annual economic activity for the region. Hinchey, a member of the U.S. House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, has worked for years to ensure the Air Force chose Stewart for the C-17 mission over bases in other states.

In November 2010, Hinchey announced that the Air Force had selected Stewart as the preferred location for the mission. A required environmental assessment, which has now been completed, yielded a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), allowing the mission to move forward. The Air Force analyzed the mission capabilities, infrastructure capacity, environmental factors and cost of implementation at a range of bases across the country in determining where to base the C-17s. Stewart beat out Memphis International Airport in Tennessee and Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport in Martinsburg in the final phase of consideration.

The C-17s will replace the 105th Airlift Wing's aging C-5A fleet, which is one of the oldest in the Air Force's inventory. As one of only two National Guard bases on the Eastern Seaboard that provides trans-Atlantic flights to service members abroad, Stewart provides essential services for U.S. armed forces, especially in the responsive delivery of both heavy and light forces and cargo to meet rapid deployment.

Hinchey has continually worked to ensure that Stewart remains an essential and strategic base for the Air National Guard. In January, Hinchey announced a \$4 million federal investment to pay for the construction of a solar farm at the base that will serve as a model for other military installations across the country, which are required to generate 25 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2025. Last March, Hinchey announced more than \$3.6 million for Stewart from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which he strongly supported and voted to pass.